

or self-interest. Upon the same hypothesis we at times need a revival in business,—in the political arena. Or we may assume to revive some of the old mythological sciences. The fore-going considerations show to us the indefinite character of our subject. This indefiniteness of subject gives us a large range for thought, and may possibly be a help to us in the further investigation and consideration of our subject.

We presume it is the intention of this convention that this subject shall be discussed from a religious standpoint. This we shall now attempt to do in a broad sense. That we feel, and are conscious that there is a spiritual religious declension and that we have need for more active attention to religion;—that we need an awakening of men and women to their spiritual and eternal interests, as well as to the spiritual and religious interests of the world. If we admit of the correctness of the fore-going statement, we also admit the fact, lamentable as it may be, that the standard and interest of the Christian religion to-day is not what it once was, or what it ought or might be at this time. Or in other words we admit that there exists spiritual apathy. It is a fact patent to every minister of the gospel and to others also, that we have too many in our churches that think or act as if religion consists only in mere organic connection with the Christian church and an occasional formal service, forgetful of the fact that a form of godliness may exist while the power is wanting. The organic relation as well as a formal service are all right in their place, but will avail a mere nothing when subjected to the divine scrutiny, unless accompanied by consecration of heart and life.

It is much now as it was with the Jews in the days of the Prophet Amos, 6:1, when he pronounced, "Woe to them that are at ease in Zion." Is it not a fact that as the Jewish dispensation was nearing its close that many of them deceived themselves as to the nature and character of their religion. They paid undue attention to national distinction, and to their connection with the temple—its external splendor and glory, and so lost the spirituality of its services. They lost the substance in the shadow, the spirit in the letter, and still boasted that they were the peculiar, chosen people of God. The church of Christ is that "Kingdom of God," or the mediatorial aspect of it, or dispensation which Christ came to establish, in which their numbers, and their graces should continue to increase. For this they were to work and pray, to consecrate mental vigor, power, and give personal united attendance, and pecuniary help, holiness of life and an untiring effort,—spend and be spent for Christ,—his cause and for the salvation of souls. Did they, the disciples of Christ, and the apostolic church meet the emergencies of that day and time? The answer in the affirmative is anticipated as coming from every one that is acquainted with the history of the apostolic church. How is it now? We ask comparatively. You may point us

to the great missionary movements of to-day, to the amount of money spent, etc. These are all right, so far as they go. But do not meet the question of issue. I much question if we are keeping pace with numerical growth, and financial ability, even in this line. If we are, why is it that there is so much coaxing, pleading, praying, scolding, in order to raise funds needed to maintain religious enterprises, and yet the enterprises of the church are languishing, and are crippled for want of funds? And on the side of the giver note the growling, complaining, whining about giving.

We feel safe in affirming that the world and the church greatly need a religious revival. We have form enough, organization a superabundance, What we need, what the church needs, is more spirit, more power, more of the Holy Ghost, more gospel; and less theory, less worldly polish, less seeking to please the world, the flesh and the Devil.

More discrimination as to what is right, as to what pleases God. We need more discrimination as to what is in harmony with the word and spirit of the word.

Is it not a fact, undeniable, that almost anything is esteemed as bible religion, if we can only give it a little scripture gloss, no matter how much twisting, misapplication or misconstruction there is in it. If we question the propriety, we are met with the reply, O! it is so deep, so profound that the ordinary mind, the common intellect cannot comprehend it,—So many are put to silence and accept of it.—If in this age of gospel indifference, a nice, portly, well educated, talkative, man or woman would start out to preach having a fine looking Bible under the arm and announce it as a Bible fact that the Devil is the fourth person in the divine family, they would have an immense following, and from all quarters we would hear, I believe that doctrine, I always had an idea that in some mysterious way God and the Devil were in partnership. Do not charge us with burlesque, we don't mean it so. This is an assumption based upon actual facts that do exist. This tendency to accept of almost anything as religion did not always exist in people as it now does. How has this state been brought about? Who are its authors? Is it not a fact that it has been brought about by professed religious teachers, preachers, as schemers, seeking popularity, or to draw away disciples after them. We are doubtless living in the time of the great apostacy spoken of by Paul, 2 Tim. 3:—2 Peter 3:3.

We need a revival, the world needs it. A revival of pure unmixed, unadulterated gospel Christianity. The question is how shall we proceed so that we may have such a revival? I answer, correct the mistakes. Let preachers quit their scheming, let them go to preaching "the gospel," as they are commanded to do. No more, no less. Have them to select gospel themes intended to meet the confused, perverted, doubting, perplexed, state and condition of society. State the issues plainly, define clearly, vindicate,

maintain and defend the truth fearlessly. This will be returning to the original ground, and pillar of the truth. Let these sermons be addressed to the minds, hearts and consciences of men and women; without apology or wavering. To do this we need zeal, knowledge. We may have both, if we will. With an open Bible, and freedom of will no one need be without a knowledge of God, or of his will concerning man.

"All scriptures inspired of God is profitable for preaching, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: that the man of God may be complete,—furnished completely unto every good work."

We may have knowledge and zeal and not be able to bring about such a religious revival as we are considering or contemplating. If from these alone we act, our effort will be as the notions of a galvanized corpse. Without real life. We need more power, we need another kind of power, we need the right kind of power, a divine, a soul quickening a soul inspiring power. From whence can come this soul needed quickening power,—this inspiration? I reply: from God through the agency of the Holy Spirit of God.—Oh! for a greater manifestation of the Holy Spirit's power upon each one of us, and upon the church of God. We fear that too many of us know the Holy Spirit by name only as connected with the personalities of the God-Head. We know so little of the Holy Spirit's grace, and love, and power: of His attributes, His office, and of His relationship to us. We scarcely know that we are related. While it may be true that miracles have ceased, it is certain that the graces and gifts of the Holy Spirit still continue. The Holy Spirit, who inspired prophets, qualified Apostles, continues to animate, to guide and comfort all that are the children of God, by the faith of Jesus Christ. The words of the Lord Jesus Christ. and the Holy Spirit are inseparably connected. "It is the Spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing, the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life," said Jesus. We cannot profitably divorce them. If we do, our preaching, and all other efforts will be in vain. We may charm by our eloquence, enchant by our rhetoric, we may thump and pound with the sledge of truth until its reports resemble the tones of thunder, it is all in vain, if the Holy Spirit is not present and in it, to sanction and apply, and to bless;—it will all pass as the storm tempest and soon be remembered only as a sensation or as the noise we made. Just as the prophet in the valley of dry bones, may preach and prophesy, but the breath of the Holy Spirit from heaven must breathe upon the dry bones, before they revive and live. Oh! that the Holy Spirit from heaven may breathe upon us, that life may revive and that the church may again stand up before the world as she did in Apostolic days, in gospel revivals. Paul affirms that the gospel is God's power. We have the same gospel they had, it has not lost its power. It is just the same old gospel. It works just the same as it did. We